

MINUTES
TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
1 December 2008

1. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 9:10 AM on Monday, 3 November 2008. Those members in attendance were Ms. Peggy Pickall, Chairperson, Mrs. Christine Dayton, Ms. Kathleen Kurtz and Mr. Robert Arnouts. Mrs. Kearby Parker, Mrs. Polly Shannahan and Mr. Eric Lowery were not present. Representing the County was Ms. Florence Ball and Mr. Martin Sokolich. Ms. Stacey Dahlstrom, who is the new Planning Officer, also attended.

Guests in attendance were Mr. George Seymour of St. Michaels, Dr. Harold (Chip) Britt, who conducts the Frederick Douglass walking tour, and Ms. Priscilla Morris, Historian.

2. NEW BUSINESS

- A. INTRODUCTION OF NEW TALBOT COUNTY PLANNING OFFICER – Ms. Stacey Dahlstrom, who recently joined the County Planning and Zoning staff as Planning Officer, was in attendance as an observer, and introduced herself to the Commissioners.

3. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW OF 3 NOVEMBER MINUTES – The minutes from the meeting on 3 November 2008 were read, and no corrections were noted. Mr. Robert Arnouts moved to approve the minutes as read, Mrs. Christine Dayton seconded and the motion was carried.
- B. UPDATES ON CURRENT PROJECTS:
1. MAHDC HANDBOOK EXCHANGE – Ms. Peggy Pickall said the MAHDC handbook is still being circulated among the Commissioners.
 2. DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE – Mr. Robert Arnouts said he composed a first draft of the Demolition Delay Ordinance proposed by TCHPC. He gave copies to Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball, asking them to review and comment. Ms. Peggy Pickall said TCHPC will wait for the results of the review by

the Department of Planning and Zoning before presenting it to Mike Pullen for review and comment.

3. 925 PORT STREET (T-347) AND THE OLD MUSIC HALL – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she hopes to be able to take \$5,000 out of the TCHPC budget to seed a matching grant for the Old Music Hall. Mr. Robert Arnouts said he is going to speak to Jennifer Stanley about getting the matching funds for that project. Ms. Peggy Pickall said the deadline for the application for the grant is March 2009, at which time TCHPC will be in the middle of working out the new budget.
 4. HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAQUES –Mrs. Kearby Parker was not present; however, Ms. Peggy Pickall said Ms. Parker had told her she still did not have the plaque at that time.
 5. DISCLOSURE OF HDO AT PROPERTY SALE CLOSINGS – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she still wants to look into that and get something in writing to give to Mike Pullen along with the draft of the Demolition Delay Ordinance.
 6. CONCERN ABOUT CHANGES TO BUILDINGS UNDER HDO WITHOUT TCHPC REVIEW – There was some discussion regarding the replacement of windows at Otwell (T-164) that was observed during a recent site visit. The windows were replaced about 12 years ago (per Peggy Pickall), apparently without TCHPC review. Ms. Florence Ball suggested sending periodic reminders to HDO property owners, clarifying what can and cannot be done in terms of maintenance to the exterior of a building without applying for TCHPC review. Ms. Peggy Pickall will check stock letters to see if there is anything like that which could be sent periodically, or could be combined with the yearly letters regarding required site visits.
- C. NEXT SITE VISIT – There will be no site visit in December due to the holiday season. Ms. Kathleen Kurtz will arrange for a site visit in January, and will advise the Commissioners once it is scheduled.

4. OPEN FLOOR

- A. FREDERICK DOUGLASS - Mr. George Seymour addressed the Commissioners, asking for their support in a campaign to change the name of the portion of Maryland Route 33 currently known as St. Michaels Road to *the Frederick Douglass Memorial Highway* in an effort to draw public attention to the historic significance of the area, particularly between St. Michaels and the farm in McDaniel where Frederick Douglass served as a slave. Mr. Seymour gave a brief history of the route. He said Douglass was a proponent of counting African-Americans as American citizens with all the rights and privileges that go with citizenship. Therefore, many people feel because he

was a patriot, and one of the earliest American slaves to achieve such a position of respect among other important men of his day, and because he was born and raised in Talbot County, renaming Rt. 33 as the *Frederick Douglass Memorial Highway* would be an excellent way to memorialize his connection with Talbot County. Mr. Seymour said he has received several letters of support, among them a copy of a letter from Senator Richard Colburn which was written to the State Highway Administration. Copies of the letters along with a list of historic sites along the route were given to Ms. Peggy Pickall, who asked Mr. Seymour whether he has contacted the governor's office about this proposition. Mr. Seymour replied that he has not done so, but thought it would be a good idea. Ms. Pickall asked if he intended for Rt. 33 in its entirety to be renamed, or just the portion between St. Michaels and McDaniel. Mr. Seymour said he would be open to both possibilities. Ms. Pickall said she will send a letter of support from TCHPC to whomever Mr. Seymour feels appropriate. Dr. Harold (Chip) Britt said he would like to take the Commissioners on the Frederick Douglass walking tour, which lasts between 1 and 1 ½ hours. Ms. Peggy Pickall said that may be a very good idea for one of the TCHPC monthly site visits. Ms. Priscilla Morris said she has not been able to find anything in the tax records in the name of Covey, and evidence is pretty strong that the farm referred to as Covey's Farm is actually *Miles End*. She will continue to look for concrete evidence. She said she should probably also mention that in 1878, Port Street to the Courthouse was a State highway, and that Frederick Douglass came to Easton on the Highland Light (steamboat) to give his public address.

After some discussion, it was decided that TCHPC would be in favor of supporting an *honorary* renaming of Rt. 33.

MOTION – Ms. Kathleen Kurtz moved that a letter of support by TCHPC for honorary renaming of Route 33 be written as requested by Mr. Seymour. Mrs. Christine Dayton seconded the motion, and it was carried.

- B. NEW FINDINGS FOR 925 PORT STREET (T-347) Ms. Priscilla Morris presented some updates to her report about the house at 925 Port Street: The house that is standing would be c1791, not 1809, and predates the houses built later to the east. The Kirby house survived a bank foreclosure and public sale during the bank crisis of 1819. The house also survived a fire at the steam saw mill and granary immediately behind it in 1857 (on infill at the old Stoakes shipyard site.) Additional information (available in the written report distributed to the Commissioners and to be included in the final report) was also given about some of the house's inhabitants and other people who lived or work nearby.
- C. STATUS OF THE FINAL REPORT FOR 925 PORT STREET (T-347) - After Ms. Priscilla Morris left the meeting, the Commissioners analyzed the various things submitted by Ms. Morris to determine whether she has fulfilled the work for which she was contracted. Mr. Martin Sokolich said the contract is not really that detailed and that the work she has done appears

to have fulfilled the contract except for the final written report. Mr. Robert Arnouts asked whether perhaps a partial payment might be in order. Ms. Peggy Pickall said she will call Ms. Morris and find out when the final report can be expected. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he will hold the invoice until he hears further from Ms. Pickall.

NEXT MEETING - Monday, 5 January 2009 at 9:00 am at the Bradley Room in the South Wing of the Courthouse.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:30 am.

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